

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 227136

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, SHUM, LE

SUBJECT: 1978 CONGRESSIONAL COUNTRY REPORT ON HUMAN RIGHTS
PRACTICES: LEBANON

REF: STATE 212848

PROVIDED BELOW FOR YOUR COMMENTS IS NEA'S FIRST DRAFT OF
THE 1978 HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT ON LEBANON WHICH WILL BE SUB-
MITTED TO THE CONGRESS AS AN UNCLASSIFIED DOCUMENT. SINCE
WE MUST DELIVER THE REPORT BY SEPTEMBER 15 TO NEA/RA FOR
APPROPRIATE CLEARANCES IN THE BUILDING, WE WOULD APPRECI-
ATE HAVING YOUR THOUGHTS BY COB SEPTEMBER THIRTEEN. WE HAVE
TRIED TO OFFEND EVERYBODY EQUALLY, LETTING THE CHIPS FALL
WHERE THEY MAY.

2. LEBANON IS IN A STATE OF VIRTUAL CHAOS AND ANARCHY.
ALTHOUGH IT HAS TRIED, THE LEBANESE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT HAS
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BEEN UNABLE TO RESTORE CONDITIONS OF SECURITY AND RESPECT
FOR LAW AND ORDER THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. UNDER THESE CIR-
CUMSTANCES, BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS OF LEBANESE CITIZENS CONTI-
NUE TO BE THREATENED AND VIOLATED THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY.
MOST OF SOUTHERN LEBANON WHERE A UN PEACEKEEPING FORCE MAIN-
TAINS SECURITY, IS AN EXCEPTION. INSTANCES OF BRUTALITY
AND EXCESSES HAVE BEEN NUMEROUS AND ATTRIBUTED TO ALL

COMBATANTS. THE FOLLOWING ABUSES ARE AMONG THE MOST SERIOUS WHICH CAN BE CITED. THEY ARE NOT A COMPREHENSIVE LIST BY ANY MEANS AND ARE LISTED ONLY AS ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE PERVASIVE CLIMATE OF ANARCHY, LAWLESSNESS, AND BRUTALITY.

-- IN MARCH, AFTER ISRAELI MILITARY ACTION IN SOUTHERN LEBANON, UPWARDS OF TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND VILLAGERS FLED FROM THEIR HOMES, OFTEN WITH ONLY THE FEW POSSESSIONS THEY COULD CARRY WITH THEM. A SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF CIVILIAN CASUALTIES ALSO RESULTED FROM THE FIGHTING AND FROM ISRAELI AIR ATTACKS NEAR BEIRUT. MANY HAVE NOW BEEN ABLE TO RETURN TO THEIR HOMES AND VILLAGES UNDER THE PROTECTIVE UMBRELLA OF THE UN.

-- ALSO IN MARCH A NUMBER OF AGED MUSLIM VILLAGERS WERE MASSACRED IN SOUTHERN LEBANON, PROBABLY BY CHRISTIAN MILITIAS. PALESTINIAN GUERRILLAS IN THE AREA HAD EARLIER BEEN GUILTY OF SIMILAR ATROCITIES.

-- ON JUNE 13 ARMED MILITIAMEN ATTACKED THE TOWN OF IHDIN IN NORTHERN LEBANON, KILLING THE LEADER OF A RIVAL FACTION, HIS WIFE, HIS THREE YEAR OLD DAUGHTER, AND ABOUT 30 OTHER PEOPLE.

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-- DURING THE NIGHT OF JULY 27-28 SOME 40 MEN WERE ABDUCTED FROM VILLAGES IN NORTHEASTERN LEBANON, AND OVER 30 WERE SUBSEQUENTLY MURDERED. ALTHOUGH THE EVIDENCE IS NOT CONCLUSIVE, CREDIBLE ACCUSATIONS HAVE BEEN MADE THAT SOME ELEMENTS OF THE SYRIAN ARMY WERE PROBABLY INVOLVED.

-- FIGHTING AMONG RIVAL FACTIONS OF CHRISTIAN MILITIAS AND AMONG COMPETING PALESTINIAN GUERRILLA GROUPS HAS BECOME ALMOST A DAILY OCCURRENCE IN AND AROUND BEIRUT. INNOCENT BY-STANDERS ARE OFTEN CAUGHT IN THE CROSSFIRE.

-- CRIMINAL ACTIVITY AND EXTORTION, SOMETIMES MASQUERADING AS POLITICAL ACTIVITY, IS ENDEMIC IN THE ABSENCE OF EFFECTIVE LEBANESE SECURITY FORCES.

-- FINALLY, IN RECENT MONTHS, COMMONLY IN RESPONSE TO SNIPING AND OTHER PROVOCATIONS FROM ARMED GROUPS, SYRIAN ELEMENTS OF THE ADF HAVE DIRECTED INDISCRIMINATE AND MASSIVE HEAVY ARTILLERY FIRE IN RESIDENTIAL QUARTERS OF BEIRUT AND ITS SUBURBS WHERE THE MILITIAS SHELTER, CAUSING LOSS OF INNOCENT LIFE AND CREATING TENS OF THOUSANDS OF

NEW REFUGEES.

1) RESPECT FOR THE INTEGRITY OF THE PERSON, INCLUDING
FREEDOM FROM :

A) TORTURE

PRIVATE MILITIAS OUTSIDE THE CONTROL OF THE CENTRAL
GOVERNMENT HAVE TORTURED AND KILLED THEIR OPPONENTS.
MILITIA FORCES IN SOUTHERN LEBANON, FOR EXAMPLE, ARE
WIDELY RUMORED TO MAINTAIN A CLANDESTINE PRISON AND
TORTURE CHAMBER, AND SUCH FACILITIES HAVE LONG BEEN A
FEATURE OF LEBANESE AND PALESTINIAN MILITIA INSTALLATIONS
THROUGHOUT LEBANON. NO CHARGES OF TORTURE HAVE BEEN
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BROUGHT AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT'S OWN SECURITY FORCES.

B) CRUEL, INHUMAN OR DEGRADING TREATMENT OR PUNISHMENT

MILITIA FACTIONS AND, OCCASIONALLY, THE PREDOMINANTLY
SYRIAN ADF HAVE ENGAGED IN BEATINGS OF OPPONENTS AND
OTHER ACTS OF BRUTALITY.

C) ARBITRARY ARREST OR IMPRISONMENT

IN ITS EFFORTS TO SUPPRESS THE ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES OF
ARMED GANGS, THE LARGELY SYRIAN ADF HAS SINCE 1976
DETAINED PRISONERS OR ALLEGED PARTISANS OF ONE GROUP OR
ANOTHER WITHOUT BENEFIT OF DUE PROCESS. THE NUMBER OF
PERSONS DETAINED BY THE ADF ARE UNKNOWN, BUT HUNDREDS OF
PEOPLE PROBABLY HAVE BEEN HELD AT ONE TIME OR ANOTHER.

D) DENIAL OF FAIR PUBLIC TRIAL

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO CONDUCT NORMAL JUDICIAL PROCESSES IN
THE PRESENT CLIMATE OF PERVASIVE INSECURITY. CRIMINAL
TRIALS CANNOT BE HELD BECAUSE OF INTIMIDATION OF JUDICIAL
OFFICIALS, AND SENTENCES CANNOT BE CARRIED OUT.

E) INVASION OF THE HOME

IN THE ABSENCE OF EFFECTIVE LEBANESE SECURITY FORCES, AND
GIVEN THE PRESENCE OF ARMED GANGS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY,
NO LEBANESE HOME IS SAFE FROM INVASION.

2) GOVERNMENTAL POLICIES RELATING TO THE FULFILLMENT OF
SUCH VITAL NEEDS AS FOOD, SHELTER, HEALTH CARE AND
EDUCATION
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THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT HAS CONCENTRATED ON PLANNING FOR

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND RECONSTRUCTION, BUT HAS BEEN UNABLE TO MAKE MUCH PROGRESS, GIVEN THE ABSENCE OF A NATIONAL POLITICAL CONSENSUS AND THE CLIMATE OF INSECURITY. IN MARCH, AFTER ISRAELI MILITIA ACTION IN SOUTHERN LEBANON CREATED UPWARDS OF 200,000 REFUGEES, THE GOVERNMENT WORKED EFFECTIVELY TO COORDINATE AND DELIVER RELIEF SUPPLIES THROUGH AN INTERMINISTERIAL COMMITTEE TO DISPLACED FAMILIES.

3) RESPECT FOR CIVIL AND POLITICAL LIBERTIES, INCLUDING:

(SAME AS LAST YEAR)

4) GOVERNMENT ATTITUDE AND RECORD REGARDING INTERNATIONAL AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL INVESTIGATION OF ALLEGED VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS.

NO INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATIONS OF VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS HAVE BEEN CARRIED OUT BY GROUPS INSIDE OR OUTSIDE LEBANON. OBJECTIVE INVESTIGATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS WOULD BE RESISTED BY THOSE WHO STAND TO BE ACCUSED, AND PROBABLY COULD NOT BE CARRIED OUT EFFECTIVELY INSIDE LEBANON UNDER CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES. THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT WOULD PROBABLY NOT OPPOSE SUCH INVESTIGATIONS, BUT WOULD BE UNABLE TO BE OF MUCH ASSISTANCE IN CARRYING THEM OUT. CHRISTOPHER

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